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DEVELOPMENT AND INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC COOPERATION

Letter dated 23 June 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i.
of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I am transmitting herewith the Final Declaration of the twenty-seventh session of the Economic Commission for Africa and eighteenth meeting of the Conference of Ministers Responsible for Economic Development and Planning, held at Addis Ababa from 20 to 23 June 1992 under the chairmanship of Senegal (see annex).

Given the importance of the Declaration, I should be most grateful if you would arrange for it to be circulated as a document of the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1992.

(Signed) Mame Balla SY
Chargé d'affaires a.i.

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Annex

FINAL DECLARATION OF THE TWENTY-SEVENTH SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR AFRICA AND EIGHTEENTH MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PLANNING

1. We, the African Ministers responsible for Economic Development and Planning, held the twenty-seventh session of the Commission and eighteenth meeting of our Conference from 20 to 23 April 1992 in Addis Ababa. Against the backdrop of the recent dramatic changes that have taken place and continue to evolve in Africa and the rest of the world, we chose as the theme of our conference New Directions for the Commission in the 1990s. This theme was intended to signify new and emerging challenges confronting African countries. The Economic Commission for Africa, whose main mission is to promote the socio-economic development and transformation of African countries, has an important role to play in assisting African member States to adapt to these changes. This was the setting in which we conducted an in-depth debate on both the current economic and social situation in Africa and the policy paper on new directions entitled "The Economic Commission for Africa in the 1990s: A policy and management framework for facing Africa's development challenges".

2. We commend the Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for his initiative and efforts in charting new directions for the activities of the Commission. We are convinced that the changes that have taken place in Africa and the rest of the world in the past few years and the accompanying challenges justify adjustment in ECA's orientation, programmes and management capacity with a view to ensuring greater impact of its activities. We consider such a reorientation to be consistent with the reforms already under way in the rest of the United Nations system.

3. We underline the need for vigorous efforts to be made in implementing the reforms needed to make ECA adapt to the changes. We further invite the Executive Secretary of ECA to involve member States actively in the reform process, especially using the informal consultative mechanism between the ECA secretariat and African diplomatic missions resident in Addis Ababa.

4. We endorse the areas of focus for ECA's programme delivery in the new orientation, which are in accordance with existing priorities. These are namely, strengthening ECA's advocacy role on socio-economic questions; promoting regional cooperation and integration; enhancing the efficiency of the public sector; promoting private initiatives and entrepreneurship; development, dissemination and utilization of science and technology; ensuring a desirable balance between food supply, population, human settlements and environment; fostering human-centred development; promoting structural transformation and diversification of African economies; and the promotion of women in development. We call upon ECA to take due account of the role of youth in development of member States.

5. We are aware of the need for ECA to stimulate increased participation at its meetings and conferences by reducing their number and frequency and concentrating such meetings on specific themes. We, therefore, entrust the Executive Secretary with conducting an in-depth study of these matters including the possibility of establishing a steering ministerial committee to meet intersessionally. This study should be submitted to the next session of the Conference for consideration.

6. We emphasize the need for the MULPOCs to be revitalized to enable them to play their role which will consist essentially of promoting integration and socio-economic development in the subregions. We call on ECA to make action-oriented and innovative proposals on this issue. We also invite ECA to conduct an in-depth study in consultation with OAU on the rationalization and reorganization of its sponsored institutions and submit a report to us at our twenty-eighth session.

7. We encourage intensified multifaceted collaboration among ECA, OAU and ADB consistent with the need to ensure that the full potentials of all African institutions and organizations are mobilized for the promotion of Africa's socio-economic development and integration. In particular, we urge them to strengthen their present joint secretariat arrangement to make it an important vehicle for implementation of the Treaty establishing the African Economic Community.

8. We recognize that extrabudgetary resources have played and will continue to play an important role in ECA's implementation of its work programmes in accordance with its priorities. At the same time, we note with concern that these resources which accounted for approximately 40 per cent of total ECA financial resources in 1985-1991 are projected to decline to 25 per cent of total resources in the 1992-1993 biennium. We underscore ECA's role as an executing agency for programmes and projects in the area of regional cooperation and integration and urge that financial contributions of the United Nations should reflect the importance of the regional dimension in operational activities for development. We encourage ECA to intensify its efforts at mobilizing extrabudgetary resources both by cultivating new donors and by strengthening relations with current ones. At the same time, we urge member States and other countries to make or increase their contribution to the United Nations Trust Fund for African Development (UNTFAD).

9. We recognize that there are strong linkages between the second United Nations Transport and Communications Decade in Africa (UNTACDA II) and the second United Nations Industrial Development Decade for Africa (IDDA II) programmes. We stress the need for coordination of the activities of the two programmes so as to accelerate socio-economic transformation and promote economic integration in Africa. We invite the ECA secretariat to prepare and submit proposals for harmonization of the activities of both programmes for review at subsequent meetings of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, Communications and Planning and Conference of African Ministers of Industry respectively, before they are sent to our next meeting.

10. We consider the adoption of the United Nations New Agenda for the Development of Africa in the 1990s (UN-NADAF) by the General Assembly at its forty-sixth session (General Assembly resolution 46/151) as an important step for addressing Africa's development, as it contains detailed and concrete commitments both by African countries and by their partners of the international community. We therefore urge all African member States and their development partners to live up to their respective commitments. We request the Executive Secretary to fully cooperate with the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Development as well as the United Nations system at large in the preparation of the evaluation reports provided for in paragraph 43 of the UN-NADAF, and to ensure prior submission of such reports to the ECA Conference of Ministers.

11. Conscious of the continuing deterioration of the economic and social situation of the African least developed countries (LDCs) including the land-locked countries whose economies are among the most vulnerable in the region, we invite the African LDCs to mobilize every resource available both internally and externally and to allocate them equitably to those economic sectors that would best make for the implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs for the 1990s. We appeal to the donor community to increase both its humanitarian and official development assistance (ODA) to the African LDCs in order to enable them to pursue the economic reforms and structural transformation indispensable to their economic and social development and to containing external shocks.

12. We are deeply concerned about the severe and unprecedented drought currently affecting the entire Eastern and Southern African subregion. We earnestly appeal to other African countries and the international community to provide the necessary assistance to the affected countries.

13. We welcome the holding of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, in June 1992. This "Earth Summit" '92 represents an important milestone in the international recognition given to environment as a common heritage of mankind. Environment is, thus, an issue around which a sense of interdependence and mutual interest has emerged between developed and developing nations. The African Common Position on the African Agenda for Environment and Development is consistent with this trend. We believe that the Rio Earth Summit is an important occasion for all the countries of the world to affirm a new partnership for development. African countries will participate in the Rio Summit in that spirit.

14. We reaffirm the continuing validity of the regional commissions as important organs of the United Nations for promoting socio-economic development in various regions of the world. It is vital, therefore, that in

the context of the ongoing restructuring and revitalization of the United Nations in the economic and social fields, the Economic Commission for Africa should be strengthened to enable it to fulfil its mission.

Done at Addis Ababa,
headquarters of the United Nations
Economic Commission for Africa,
23 April 1992